

OOSKAnews

# Weekly Water Report

NOVEMBER 10, 2010, VOL. 3, ISSUE 42



## LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN



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OOSKAnews Weekly Water Digest, Water news from the developing world.

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- Middle East & Africa
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- Eastern Europe & Former Soviet Union
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Water Weekly

Published by OOSKAnews, Inc. • 37 Main St. • Warrenton, VA • USA • 20186  
 For subscription information, telephone (+1) 540 428 3440 or email your contact details to [sales@ooskanews.com](mailto:sales@ooskanews.com)

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## FOCUS THIS WEEK

### Hurricane Tomas Raises Concerns About Water Supply Throughout Caribbean

WASHINGTON, DC, United States (OOSKAnews)

**T**omas, a strong Category 1 storm that tore through the Caribbean last week, has left several parts of the region facing possible shortages of clean drinking water and sanitation.

St. Lucia was hardest hit, with Prime Minister Stephenson King calling Tomas the worst natural disaster to ever hit the island. It caused “fallen trees, infrastructural damage to buildings, damage to major roads consequentially restricting access to various areas and temporary loss of utility services across the island,” according to a joint statement by the St. Lucia Tourist Board and the St. Lucia

Hotel & Tourism Association.

There were also 14 confirmed deaths due to the storm in St. Lucia, and a national disaster was declared.

The loss of utility services, primarily water and electricity, were of particular concern for the island, which also suffered damage to its main freshwater reservoir.

The John Compton Dam -- the main source of water for the people of St. Lucia -- was not functioning due to a landslide, and strict water rationing is in effect, according to a report in the Huffington Post.

However, the joint tourism statement said, “detailed inspections revealed damage to the water dam is substantially less than expected,” which would make it possible to restore potable water supply services soon.

## OOSKAnews

OOSKAnews, Inc is the market leading news provider on the water sector in the developing world.

Founded in 2006, the company deploys more than 150 freelance writers in more than 40 countries – local and national business journalists; experts in water and the environment; academics and economists.

OOSKAnews publishes seven email newsletters every week delivering news on all aspects of the water sector in Southern, Central and Eastern Asia; the Middle East; Africa; Eastern Europe; the Former Soviet Union States; Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Around 200 original stories every month cover funding and finance developments; business opportunities; water supply issues; wastewater and the environment; local, national and international water policy. Each newsletter further carries a “Local Press Reports” section, summarizing how local media in developing countries are reporting local water issues.

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## OOSKAnews



OOSKAnews offers water sector research and consultancy services through a strategic partnership with Ergo ([www.ergo.net](http://www.ergo.net)), a global primary research and consulting firm.

This partnership harnesses OOSKAnews’ water sector and developing world expertise and contacts to Ergo’s proprietary network of over 7,000 global experts and 60 in-country teams, all deeply embedded in their sectors ranging from finance to infrastructure to telecommunications to mining and beyond.

The OOSKAnews –Ergo partnership provides custom water-sector-related studies including: geopolitical analyses; economic risk assessments; market landscaping; opportunity mapping; country sector studies; deep dive research; scenario mapping; competitive intelligence; market entry strategies; partner and management due diligence; and negotiation intelligence.

For more information on OOSKAnews – Ergo research and consultancy services, email [david@ooskanews.com](mailto:david@ooskanews.com) or phone +1 540 428 3440.

In fact, an extensive clean up and restoration of critical infrastructure plan is underway and it is expected that the island will be back to normal by the end of this week.

“The government is working around the clock but there is no doubt that hard work, resolve and compassion of the Saint Lucian people is the key element in helping our country get back into peak form,” Caribbean News Now quoted Tourism Minister Senator Allen Chastanet as saying.

Meanwhile, “Some of our larger hotels have their own water desalination and purification systems and are able to supply water to guests -- and to members of local communities,” he added.

Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines also sustained significant damage to roads, buildings and utility services.

Both St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have called for international support and help in reconstruction after the storm. The Organization of American States announced last week that it would provide assistance to the OAS member countries.

OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza and Assistant Secretary General Ambassador Albert Ramdin almost immediately activated the Inter-American Emergency Fund.

Ramdin was quoted by Caribbean News Now as saying, “Natural disasters have become a recurrent threat to life and property in our region. In the current economic climate, countries simply don’t have the means to effectively recover the damage. As a hemisphere we need to strengthen our response mechanism to assist those in need.”

The government of Grenada has also vowed to help its neighboring island nations, with Prime Minister Tillman Thomas leading a delegation to tour the destruction.

Thomas said St Lucia is “badly in need of water,” and if possible, “water should be airlifted” to the island.

The Caribbean arm of Caritas Internationalis said supplying water is the one of the most important things to do now. It is shipping bottled water, water storage containers, chlorine tablets for water treatment and food to both St. Lucia and St. Vincent.

After Hurricane Tomas battered the southern Caribbean islands, it turned north-northeast as a tropical storm. It brought strong winds and heavy rains to Costa Rica, Jamaica, Cuba, the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos and Haiti, which is still reeling from a 7.2 earthquake that hit last January and a recent cholera outbreak.

Costa Rica suffered extensive damage from the heavy rains, with landslides killing at least 20 people and many others still missing.

Also, hundreds have been left without water services.

The storm then turned east, gained strength back to a Category 1 hurricane and passed between Cuba and Haiti. Luckily, Haiti and its more than 1 million people still leaving in tent camps were spared a direct hit.

However, Haiti’s Civil Protection Department said the storm killed at least 20 people, with seven missing. It also caused flooding in five southern departments and in other regions including Artibonite, Centre, North West and the communities of Leogane, closest to the earthquake’s epicenter with 90 percent destruction.

Francoise Gruloos-Ackermans, UNICEF Representative in Haiti, was quoted by the Jamaica Observer as saying, “Our immediate goal is to assess the impacts of the storm and prioritize our response and coordination efforts to ensure access to adequate sanitation, safe water and basic health care.”

Wesley Laine, a Haitian who works with non-governmental organization International Action, which implements water and sanitation projects in Haiti, told OOSKAnews that “we are not strangers to hurricanes, but what we haven’t dealt with before is having our people in tents.”

He said that after every storm there is a rise in clean water demand, as well as a rise in water-borne diseases.

He is unsure how the storm’s floods will affect the current cholera outbreak, but stressed that people there were dying from water-borne diseases long before cholera was found.

## IAEA Uses Isotopes to Uncover Threats to Groundwater

VIENNA, Austria (OOSKAnews)

An international agency best known for inspecting atomic sites and verifying fission weapons treaties is using its own nuclear techniques to shine light on one of the world’s most threatened resources: groundwater.

Like forensics investigators at a crime scene, scientists are examining the fingerprints of water molecules to determine the age, origins and replenishment rates in the earth’s hidden water reserves.

Significantly, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) officials say advances in isotope hydrology technology are helping

developing countries get a more accurate picture of their water resources, and can provide an early warning of depletion amid growing alarm over stress on groundwater, which supplies most the earth's fresh water.

Manfred Groenig, who heads the IAEA's isotope hydrology laboratory in Vienna, said relatively little is known about deep underground water, some of which predates humans.

"I would guess that people know more about the moon," he said.

IAEA's hydrology team is changing that through use of sensitive spectrometers to analyze the hydrogen and oxygen isotopes of water molecules to better understand groundwater.

Though isotope hydrology has existed for decades, recent advances have made detailed and highly accurate probes of groundwater more simple and portable.

Traditionally, field hydrologists and geologists have relied on chemical testing, test wells and measurements to learn about the water they could not see, without the greater accuracy of isotope hydrology.

The IAEA has provided laser analyzers smaller than a desktop and costing around \$60,000 USD to developing countries to give them a better idea of threats to groundwater supplies.

In recent years, the agency has invested \$30 million USD to help 60 countries use the isotope technology to monitor aquifers.

The IAEA, with an overall budget of \$454.9 million USD, will spend some \$4.6 million USD on water resource programs in 2011, and nearly double that amount will be available for technical assistance -- mainly for developing nations -- over the next two years.

Learning how to use the technology is not complicated, said IAEA isotope hydrology

section chief Pradeep Aggarwal: "In half an hour you can be trained to do it."

But more isotope hydrology testing may only confirm what is already known: With surface water already under siege, water mining is draining aquifers at a potentially irreversible pace.

Globally, the groundwater depletion rate has more than doubled in recent decades, according to a new study led by researchers at Utrecht University in the Netherlands.

Rapid population growth and ruinous irrigation practices are taxing freshwater supplies in much of the developing world, notably in Asia and Africa.

Agriculture is both a drain on water and a polluter -- in much of Central Asia, for example, irrigation consumes more than 90 percent of water use; in India more than 80 percent. One-third of groundwater pollution in Central Asia is attributed to fertilizers and chemicals used in food production.

Calling the water situation a "crisis," the Asian Development Bank organized a conference in mid-October aimed at spurring public-private initiatives to combat waste through better infrastructure and modern drip irrigation methods.

The bank estimates that leaky water systems in Asian cities alone waste 29 billion cubic meters of water per year, worth around \$9 billion USD.

Wealthier nations are not immune. In Europe, North America and more developed regions fertilizers and other pollutants are spoiling aquifers, including water thousands of years old.

Some coastal cities are draining groundwater reserves so rapidly that saltwater could invade, a calamity that researchers say could take decades to reverse -- assuming no additional freshwater was pumped out.

While scientists say the world has enough

freshwater to sustain humans, the challenge is in how to be more judicious in its use.

That challenge will grow all the more daunting in years to come.

"There will be generations of people who will have to change tremendously in their lifestyle just to be sure that [water] is available," IAEA's Groenig said in an interview at the agency's Vienna hydrology lab. Today, more than 700 million people live in areas where there is water scarcity, and that figure is expected to grow to 3 billion by 2035, according to the World Bank.

The UN estimates that some 900 million people lack safe drinking water, despite a decade-long push by donors to improve water and sanitation access in impoverished nations.

In Asia, the shortfall between water supplies and demand is expected to be 40 percent within 20 years.

Groundwater supplies, like the rivers and lakes on the earth's surface, know no borders.

Many nations have formed commissions to try to work out conflicts over surface water -- among them countries that share the Indus, Nile and Mekong rivers, and the five Central Asian nations that are members of the Interstate Coordinating Water Commission.

So far, there is little corresponding cooperation over groundwater resources.

How might isotope hydrology be used to help boost interstate cooperation and galvanize efforts to avert a groundwater crisis?

Aggarwal said having facts can help. "In every instance, the basic ingredient of cooperation is sound scientific information that everybody understands, and can appreciate, and can trust. Only then you can have trusting organizations, and trust policies and decisions that you need to make."

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

### Future Droughts Predicted in Mexican Cities

MEXICO CITY, Mexico (OOSKAnews)

The Head of the Mexican National Water Commission (Conagua), José Luis Luege Tamargo, predicted droughts within the next 10 years in the Valley of Mexico region if preventative steps are not taken now.

He said housing developments are being constructed rapidly, without the consent of authorities, in areas which do not have sufficient water to support them.

“There is construction with municipal authorization of building permits and land use changes, but without taking into account the extraction of water from aquifers which have been overdrawn to a very high degree” El Sol de Mexico newspaper quoted him as saying.

He was speaking at the inauguration of a water bank for the Valley of Mexico region.

Water banks are designed to manage the acquisition and transfer of water rights, and are being opened by Conagua around the country.

The Director of Mexico City's Water System (SACM), Ramón Aguirre Díaz, also recently predicted a \$120.8 million USD cut in water infrastructure spending in 2011, creating problems with sewers and rehabilitation of pumping stations and wastewater treatment plants and preventing the expansion of services, El Universal newspaper reported.

Likewise, President of the Mexican Chamber of the Construction Industry Gustavo Arballo Luján recently warned that the Guadalajara metropolitan region faces water shortages in 12-15 years if there is not more investment in water infrastructure, according to Informador newspaper.

He warned that factors like a lack of public funds and influence of political interests could lead to delays in infrastructure projects.

Many projects have been left unfinished, he noted.

He also said the CMIC supports an increase in tariffs for state water utility SIAPA, but said that increased transparency in the organization was also necessary.

SIAPA has also requested creation of a tariff board that would allow rate changes without intervention from local representatives.

The CMIC estimates that SIAPA needs to invest approximately \$1.6 billion USD in water infrastructures, according to Informador.

### World Bank Lending for Water Hits \$1.67 Billion USD in 2010

WASHINGTON, DC, United States (OOSKAnews)

The International Development Association's (IDA) lending to the water and sanitation sector increased by 50 percent in 2010 compared to last year, reaching \$1.67 billion USD, the World Bank announced on November 1.

In a report posted on the bank's website, the IDA reported that between 1998 and 2010, lending for the water supply and sanitation sector averaged \$577 million USD each fiscal year.

Half of the unprecedented \$1.67 billion USD was loaned to countries in Africa while the remainder went to the Middle East and South Asia, notably India and Yemen.

The funds have been channeled through the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP), which works directly with IDA client governments in 25 countries.

The program's current activities include improving monitoring of water and sanitation utility performance through the International Benchmarking Network database and piloting programs to promote sanitation and hygiene.

For example, the IDA's 2002-2008 Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in Tanzania aided the national rural water supply and sanitation program through construction of hand-pumped supplies and small piped programs, providing improved access to water supply and sanitation services for over 500,000 people.

In Indonesia, 600,000 households and 3,000 schools benefited from improved water supply and sanitation services under the Second Water and Sanitation for Low-Income Communities Project (2000-2010).

The ongoing water supply development project (2005-2012) in Vietnam has so far provided 1.55 million people with access to improved water supply and 50,000 people with access to improved sanitation facilities.

The Mostar Water Supply and Sanitation Project (2000-2005)

improved the city’s water and wastewater services as part of a broader IDA program in a post-conflict environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, through investment in new water supplies and rehabilitation of several water distribution systems. By the end of the project, the population benefiting from continuous service rose to 75 percent in 2004, from 59 percent in 2000.

An Urban Water Supply Project (1998-2004) supported turnaround of two water utilities in Cambodia.

Through the project, 750,000 people gained access to water supply services in Phnom Penh. The number of water supply connections increased to more than 105,777 from 10,777.

The India Karnataka Urban Water Sector Improvement Project (2005-2010) provided continuous, efficient, and sustainable water service delivery in urban areas. About 175,000 individuals, or 25,000 households, benefited from the project.

“IDA will continue to focus on priorities set during the previous cycle, with Africa remaining a major region of focus,” the report stated in part.

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## Sao Paulo State Installs New Flood Alert System

SAO PAULO, Brazil (OOSKAnews)

In the wake of a recent series of floods in different parts of Brazil, the government of São Paulo state, the richest in the country, in late October launched a state-wide flood alert system, at a cost of \$1.2 million USD.

The system will be headed up by three state-owned companies.

It will give heavy rain alerts at least two hours ahead of time through a network of both governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The alert system will be run by Cesp and Emae, two state-owned companies in the power sector, and by water and sanitation company Sabesp.

It will transmit meteorological (rain) and hydrological (river) data collected every 10 minutes through a network of 200 telemetry stations -- 40 new ones will be installed by the end of the year -- and a meteorological radar.

The government will acquire more radar equipment in the Alto Tietê River basin (which feeds the city of São Paulo) and the Piracicada basin (which serves the state’s second most populated region in the city of Campinas).

Once the data indicates flows of water levels higher than the safe range, the system will feed information to a network of personal and radio stations around São Paulo.

The system has already been installed in situation rooms in São Paulo and Piracicaba, and by December will be also available in Taubate city, in the Paraíba River basin.

•••••

## EC Provides \$2 Million USD to Bolivia for Water, Drought Management

BRUSSELS, Belgium (OOSKAnews)

The European Commission on November 4 announced a nearly \$2 million USD humanitarian aid package to Bolivia for people most affected by ongoing droughts in the Bolivian Chaco region.

The aid package not only addresses current humanitarian needs of drought-affected people, but also focuses on recovery and capacity building to better handle water scarcity issues in the future.

It has three main components -- potable water management, livelihood support and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

The water component involves delivering potable water by truck, rehabilitating water catchments, constructing water storage facilities and increasing water management training with communities and authorities.

Livelihood support includes things like food vouchers, seed distribution, soil rehabilitation and improvement of production and post-harvesting practices.

DRR activities that promote drought-sustainable response methodologies are also part of the program.

“Disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction measures need to be mainstreamed as much as possible in all activities to improve the communities’ resilience to future events,” said Commissioner

Kristalina Georgieva.

“Communities and municipalities should be encouraged and supported to manage drought during the whole year and not just during its peak.”

The Bolivian Chaco has been experiencing record high temperatures and long periods without rainfall since 2008.

The 2010 dry season has reached critical drought levels, adversely affecting human health, livestock and agriculture.

“We all know that the climate change will certainly trigger similar crises in the future unless remedial action is adopted.

“We must try to avoid ‘repetition’ of such crises whenever possible, this will help people to improve their lives instead of having to start again from nothing after every shock,” Georgieva added.

The EC has given approximately \$7 million USD in humanitarian aid to Bolivia since 2008, not counting this most recent grant.

## Uberaba Asks World Bank for Additional \$85.4 Million USD for Sanitation Project

UBERABA, Brazil (OOSKANews)

Uberaba, a city of 3 million people in the rural area of Brazil’s Minas Gerais state, is currently negotiating with the World Bank for an extra loan of \$85.4 million USD to raise the percentage of people served by sanitation and waste collection and treatment services to 98 percent.

A team from the bank visited and approved development of the Agua Viva program,

a water and sanitation program already funded with World Bank resources and run by municipal water and sanitation company Codau.

Brazil’s national government is also in talks with the municipality to provide the extra money.

A new visit is scheduled for federal government officials after Brazil’s presidential election in November; at that point, there is expected to be more clarity on the availability of extra funds for the water and sanitation sector.

If Uberaba gets approval for the additional funds, the total amount allocated for Agua Viva will reach \$125 million USD.

Almost \$28 million USD of that amount has already been spent for new treatment stations, water pipelines, flood prevention and distribution systems.

The projects were developed under the supervision of World Bank officials.

Caixa Economica federal, a Brazilian state-run bank dedicated to funding housing and sanitation projects, also expressed willingness to launch new phases of the Agua Viva program, once both the national government and the World Bank agree on raising new money for the program.

## Latin Consult, Sabesp Win International Tender in Honduras

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (OOSKANews)

A consortium of Latin Consult and Sabesp, the state water and sewage services company owned by the the government of Brazil’s Sao Paulo state, won

the international tender organized by the Honduran government to advise nine municipalities in the Central American country on commercial and operational management.

The project has an expected cost of \$2.3 million USD and is expected to be completed within three years, starting next December.

The consultancy work is aimed at establishing management methods and strategic planning activities in the areas of water treatment and disposal of end-use sewage.

This is the second successful bid by Sabesp abroad; both times it has partnered with Latin Consult.

In September 2009, the consortium was selected to assist Panamanian local sanitation company Idaan with implementing a program for rational use of water.

The contract was worth \$8.8 million USD.

Sabesp serves 26 million people in the state of Sao Paulo and is the fifth largest company in its area of operation.

It is the only Brazilian company in its area to operate in other countries.

In Brazil, Sabesp already provides advice and services on water and sewage to 10 other companies in the area.

“The generation of income in foreign currency is one of the strategies to generate resources that allow us to universalize, by 2018, the water and sewerage services in all municipalities operated in the state of Sao Paulo,” Sabesp President Gesner Oliveira told OOSKANews through his press office.

In the next few months, Sabesp is expecting a new advisory contract with Argentine company Aysa to rehabilitate water and sewage networks, control losses, treat domestic wastewater for energy recovery, prevent climate change and manage projects and process automation.

## IADB Lends Brazil \$99 Million USD to Improve Water, Sanitation and Agriculture

WASHINGTON, DC, United States (OOSKANews)

**A** The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) will lend Brazil's Tocantins state some \$99 million USD to improve irrigation and water and sanitation services.

"The program will seek to optimize the multiple uses of water supplies in the southwestern region of Tocantins through a combination of infrastructure investments and better regulation, with the goal of contributing to the state's sustainable development and enhancing its living standards," according to an IADB release on November 9.

The program calls for construction of a 179-million-cubic-meter reservoir and three small dams on the Pium and Rozinho rivers.

Agriculture producers will augment this infrastructure with a system of canals and pumping stations.

Altogether, the irrigation system will supply water to some 25,600 hectares of farmland.

The program will also improve water and sanitation services in the municipalities of Pium, Lagoa da Confusão and Cristalândia, improving the livelihoods of 14,000 people.

"By the fifth year of the program, 90 percent of the people in these municipalities should be connected to a potable water system, up from less than 38 percent today, and 90 percent should also be connected to a sewerage system, up from 1 percent today," the IADB said.

Another objective of the program is to improve regional development, which will be done through capacity-building measures, establishing business plans for agricultural chains, and information sharing, promotion and dissemination activities.

Agricultural technicians and producers will also receive training on irrigation techniques.

The program will fund environmental impact mitigation, as well as improving institutional capacity of environmental authorities.

The 25-year loan has a five-year grace period and a variable interest rate based on Libor.

The state of Tocantins will be the executing agency through its Department of Water Resources and Environment.

## Sixty-Nine Mexican Cities Face Water Shortages

MEXICO CITY, Mexico (OOSKANews)

**A**t least 69 of the 121 largest cities in Mexico face critical water availability issues, according to a report on climate change in Latin America published by international NGO Oxfam.

The study, released in October, identified Metropolitan Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla, Tijuana, Leon, Toluca and Queretaro as the cities with the lowest levels of water availability.

"Approximately 46 million people are at risk of facing social crisis due to the absence of the liquid. According to data from the National Water Commission Conagua, in the last 100 years almost 90 percent of available water has been used," the report said.

The report identified water shortages as one of the most serious development problems facing Mexico, and warned that climate change would make matters worse due to increasing unpredictable weather and vulnerability to extreme events.

Conagua's 2009 sub-sector report on potable water, sewerage and sanitation said that Guadalajara receives 210 liters per inhabitant per day, Tijuana 186, Leon 79, and Puebla 177, according to Tabasco Hoy newspaper.

Mexico City receives 320 liters per capita per day, but due to leaks in the system the actual amount it receives is estimated at 220 liters per capita per day.

The World Health Organization (WHO) considers the minimum supply required to meet the basic needs of the population to be 250 liters per person per day.

## La Paz Considers Replacing State Utility

LA PAZ, Bolivia (OOSKANews)

The City Council in the Bolivian capital, La Paz, is recommending creation of a municipal water utility to replace state-owned utility Epsas.

FM Bolivia quoted City Council President Gabriela Niño de Guzmán as saying in October that the utility has not properly addressed problems with potable water and sewerage systems, and left some regions of La Paz at risk of flooding and landslides.

Mayor Luis Revilla said the problems will continue until Epsas is replaced.

Epsas General Manager Victor Rico acknowledged deficiencies in service, but blamed a lack of investment in urban sewerage systems, and denied that the utility has put the city at risk.

Epsas serves La Paz and the neighboring city of El Alto.

## LOCAL PRESS REPORTS

### MEDIA BRIEFS FROM THE REGION

### BARBADOS

#### Barbados Residents Still Without Water, Power

BRIDGETOWN

A large number of Barbados residents were without water

supply and power last week in the wake of tropical storm Tomas.

The Barbados Water Authority (BWA) said in a statement that its management had been "reviewing the status of its operations and is pleased to report that power has been restored to a number of its pumping stations. As a result several areas that were without water are now being serviced."

"In the meanwhile water tankers have been dispatched to those areas without water. It may take some time for the tankers to reach all areas," the company said.

Source: Barbados Nation

### BELIZE

#### IADB Considers \$5 Million USD Loan to Belize

BELMOPAN

The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) is considering lending \$5 million USD to Belize for rehabilitation work in the aftermath of Hurricane Richard last month,

IADB President Luis Alberto Moreno said on November 4.

"We have been assured that the president will personally oversee the fast-tracking of an initial funding component that will help us with putting in place mitigation efforts in areas that have been particularly hard-hit but that will not be limited to those areas,"

Belize Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Dean Barrow said.

The funds assistance would be used for a seawall in the Port Loyola area, as well as drainage and street rehabilitation.

Barrow said an IADB team would be in Belize this week "to do the diagnostics and

define the scope of the intervention."

The IADB is also considering another loan of \$5 million USD for the Integrated Water and Sanitation Program for the Placencia Peninsula.

Source: Amandala (Belize)

## CHILE

**Marubeni to Acquire  
Aguas Nuevas**

TOKYO

*Trading house Marubeni*

*Corp. and public-private investment fund Innovation Network Corp. of Japan plan to jointly acquire Chilean tap water business firm Aguas Nuevas for about \$492 million*

USD.

*The two Japanese companies plan to buy all shares of the Chilean firm by the end of this year, on a 50-50 basis.*

*Marubeni acquired another tap water firm, Aguas Decima, in October 2006.*

*Source: Mainichi Daily News (Japan)*

## JAMAICA

**GEF Provides Funds  
for Solar, Wind  
Reverse Osmosis  
Plant**

KINGSTON

*The Global Environment Facility is providing funds for a project to use solar and wind power to run a small reverse-osmosis (RO) desalination system in Jamaica.*

*The facility is providing \$40,000 USD and the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica is providing an additional \$10,000 USD in co-funding.*

*The desalination plant would be carried out by the Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI). It will use simple low-speed wind generators, powered by halved 45-gallon drums cut to create angled flaps, to run turbines, that will produce up to 2 kilowatts of energy.*

*CMI renewable energy consultant Charles Bromfield said he had developed a hybrid system in which wind power backed up solar and vice versa.*

*Source: International Desalination & Water Reuse Quarterly*

**NWC Urges  
Customers to Store  
Water**

KINGSTON

*Jamaica's National Water Commission (NWC) is urging customers to store water in preparation for Tropical Storm Tomas.*

*NWC Corporate Public Relations Manager Charles Buchanan recommended that people store enough water to last for at least seven days for every member of their household.*

*Buchanan said the NWC was working to restore water supply systems that are currently out of operation.*

*Although most of the island's supply systems are up and running, they are vulnerable during periods of rainfall, he said.*

*Source: Go-Jamaica*

## NICARAGUA

**Nicaragua, Costa  
Rica in Armed Stand-  
Off Over River  
Dredging**

MANAGUA

*Nicaraguan and Costa Rican*

*security forces are in an armed standoff after Costa Rica claimed that Nicaragua's efforts to dredge the San Juan River crossed into Costa Rican territory.*

*Nicaragua categorically denied the accusation.*

*Costa Rican President Laura Chinchilla accused the Nicaraguan army of occupying Isla Calero, an uninhabited river island on the San Juan.*

*Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said Costa Rica had invaded its territory and ac-*

*cused Costa Rica of plotting to "steal" the river.*

*He said a 2009 ruling by the International Court of Justice at The Hague gives his country the right to dredge the San Juan River and restore its historic water flow to pre-*

1858 levels.

He said that since that time, accumulated river sediment

has dried the southern part of the San Juan's historic delta.

Organization of American

States (OAS) Secretary General José Miguel Insulza traveled between the two countries last week to arrange

a dialogue between them.

Source: The Miami Herald (United States)

PERU

Egemsa Submits EIS to Use Water From Aobamba River

LIMA

Peruvian state power gen-

erator Egemsa submitted an environmental impact statement to the Energy and Mines Ministry to use water from the Aobamba River.

The submission is for a project in Cuzco department to

produce hydroelectric power.

The project has two components -- construction of a 7-megawatt run-of-river small hydropower plant and a 10-megawatt increase in capacity at Egemsa's 107-mega-

watt Machupicchu hydropower plant, using discharge from the run-of-the-river-plant.

Source: PennWell